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DEREK STANFORD

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THE COMMONWEAL

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THE COMMONWEAL

A WEEKLY REVIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, LITERATURE AND THE ARTS

Archbishop Rummel's Decision

THE DECISION of Archbishop Joseph F. Rummel to put an immediate end to segregation in the parochial schools of the Archdiocese of New Orleans is a particularly welcome and significant one. It is welcome because the existence of segregated parochial schools is a scandal to the Church and a disservice to the nation. It is significant because it indicates that the Church in New Orleans is quite willing to risk its temporal welfare for a basic principle of social justice.

This latter point is of special importance. The Church's position on segregation and discrimination could hardly be more clear. As Archbishop Rummel has said, it is "morally wrong and sinful." But what has been far less clear is the extent to which the Church in the South is willing to put into practice this basic Catholic teaching. It has often appeared as if the Church lacked the nerve or the conviction to withstand hostile pressure—as if it valued its financial security and social position more than anything else. It is quite possible that such an accusation has been an unjust one. Yet the Church always leaves itself open to this kind of charge when there is a seeming discrepancy between its principles and its practice.

Archbishop Rummel's decision should do much to quell skepticism. There can be little doubt that the opposition will be fierce. Already a number of Catholic laymen have begun talking of a boycott of the parochial schools. Others have raised the possibility of punitive legislation against them. Still others have picketed the home of Archbishop-Coadjutor John P. Cody. In short, there is little reason to believe that the decision will be accepted gracefully or that all the old pressures will not be brought to bear once again. The impact of these pressures on the parochial schools could well be disastrous.

Can the Church, given the fact of malicious coercion, do otherwise? Naturally. It can always

plead, when faced with opposition, that its first duty is survival, that it is enough to preserve the deposit of faith and to insure the education of its youth. But surely this is a narrow, demeaning conception of the Church, one which is willing to sacrifice the witness of the Church in the world for the sake of community acceptance and a nominal, purely passive physical existence. Moreover, just as a matter of history, it may well be doubted that taking the course of least resistance serves even the temporal well-being of the Church. The Church in the South is an apt example: the rebellion of many Southern Catholic laymen and priests against the bishops has its roots in the temporizing of earlier generations of Catholics.

IT MAY, of course, be objected that there are times when the Church must accept the culture of a society in which it finds itself. Again, there are times when the Church has to show a sensitivity to the consensus of opinion in a pluralistic society. So too there are times when it is appropriate and legitimate for laymen to differ with their bishops on matters of public policy.

Such considerations do not apply in the city of New Orleans in the year 1962. They do not apply, in the first place, because Catholics form a substantial cultural force in that city. In the second place, both the national consensus and federal law support integration. Finally, the dissident Catholic laymen are not arguing that a different means be chosen for effecting the good end of integration and racial justice. On the contrary, they are flatly opposing the Church's moral position and the clear moral authority of the Archbishop. Their stand is a purely racist one, as harmful to the integrity of the Church as it is to the common good.

In that situation, the Church in New Orleans cannot afford to back down. To do so now would simply encourage further coercion by the state and confirm already mistaken Catholics in their belief

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hat the Church's teaching on racial justice need not be taken seriously. In addition, should the Church weaken, it would amount to a serious blow to all those Catholics who have fought long and hard for justice. Time and again, Catholic integrationists have felt that they did not have the wholehearted support of the hierarchy. It is vital that their personal risks be matched by the hierarchy, that the Church at the highest level be as bold as the Church at the lowest.

If there is one thing that the South desperately needs today, it is decisive moral leadership. The Catholic Church, especially in New Orleans, is in an excellent position to provide that leadership. The price may be very high. But if the Church is not willing to pay it, who will? Archbishop Rummel has done his part. It is now up to the Catholics of New Orleans to do theirs.

Food for the Chinese

HUNGER on a mass scale due to mismanagement and natural calamities has often stricken the people of China. Food shortages are extremely critical now. This crisis is said to be the major concern of the National People's Congress, from which foreign newspapermen and diplomats are barred. Chinese reaching Portuguese Macao say their daily rice ration was cut to four and one-half ounces for adults and three ounces for children.

There are many arguments against sending food to a Communist China that is the most belligerent of America's enemies now and potentially the greatest future menace. One is that American food would permit the Chinese Communists to concentrate once more on heavy industry. But the relieving of present shortages would have no such lasting effect; the Communists would still have to concentrate on food production for future seasons. It is further contended that lack of food will lead to a revolt against the Mao regime, although starvation on these dimensions has never before done so in history. And China might well dispatch some of this food to Albania or Cuba to further Communist objectives.

But if American food is withheld out of such considerations it would not affect the Communist authorities so much as the subject Chinese people, with whom one day we hope to live in peace and friendship. There is considerable American sentiment in favor of sending food to the Chinese people in this extreme hour of need, from citizens in rural areas to George Meany of the A.F.L.-C.I.O.

Recently the International Trading Corporation of Seattle, a firm of over forty years standing,

sought government permission to sell four hundred million dollars worth of wheat and barley to Communist China and North Korea. The request was rejected on the grounds that evidence was lacking that Communist China had made such a request or that the required foreign exchange was available. President Kennedy later declared that an official Communist Chinese plea for help could receive consideration.

But human life is cheap in the Orient, doubly so under a regime which holds that man functions for the sake of the State. What possibility is there that Communist China would officially admit its inability to provide sufficient sustenance and so demean itself before its principal enemy?

Certain American advocates of the Baruch plan for international control of atomic armaments once argued their case so hard as to insist that inspection teams would supply the added advantage of penetrating the Iron Curtain. Soviet fears of their presence have blocked the creation of an inspection system ever since. The desire to exploit the food crisis to humiliate the Chinese Communist regime likewise presses too far. Canada and Australia have sold large quantities of grain to China on a straight commercial basis without causing our allies in Southeast Asia to lose heart. The United States could lift its embargo for the purpose without lowering its guard. Such a demonstration of concern for the hungry people of China would greatly enhance America's world stature.

Baker v. Carr

EVERYONE AGREES that the recent Supreme Court decision on Congressional reapportionment was "historic." Nobody agrees on what will come of this decision, however, and in just what way it will turn out to be "historic."

That rural areas of the United States were over-represented and urban areas under-represented has long been one of the facts of life in our politics. But since reapportionment is the responsibility of state legislatures, and since inequitable representation has permitted rural areas to dominate these legislatures, demands for redistricting amounted to demands that rural legislators vote themselves out of existence. This they declined to do, despite appeals in the name of democracy or even in the name of unequivocal state constitutional provisions for periodic reapportionment. The Vermont state legislature, for instance, has repeatedly refused to revise the districting system set up in 1793.

Attempts over the years to break the rural stranglehold on state legislatures, which also controlled

Congressional districting, had all come to nothing. In 1946, in fact, the Supreme Court had apparently closed the door on any possibility of judicial redress by declaring the question of reapportionment outside the competence of the courts. Now the Court has reversed the 1946 decision and held that federal courts have the power and duty of hearing cases which challenge legislative districts as infringements on a citizen's rights under the Fourteenth Amendment. That is all the Court held, but it was enough to set off happy cheering—from Democrats, mostly—and angry muttering—from Republicans, mostly.

Some such reaction is entirely in order, we agree, but we wonder if the cheers and mutters are not only premature but coming from the wrong quarters as well. There is no doubt that the *Baker v. Carr* decision will ultimately contribute to more democratic legislative districting throughout the nation, and thus to a diminution of presently disproportionate rural strength, but the mere fact of the Supreme Court ruling will accomplish nothing along these lines in itself. Corrective action will still have to come from the legislatures, and this action will come, we are afraid, only after many long years of litigation, resistance and legislative maneuvering.

Less clear than the long-range effect on rural-urban representation, however, is the significance of this development to our major political parties. For one thing, expected redistricting will add to suburban representation even more than that of the cities, and the record indicates that it will be the G.O.P. which profits most from any reapportionment in the suburbs. For another, since Republican strength in the South is almost exclusively in the cities, correction of the rural-urban representation imbalance will serve to hasten the end of the one-party (i.e., Democratic) Solid South.

We agree, then, that the Supreme Court's reapportionment decision is historic, and we think it will

be historic in ways quite beyond the immediate partisan predictions that have been made. Even the states' rightists, who have grumbled loudest against the decision, may very well find that with more urban votes, the states will then concern themselves with problems like housing and transit which they have ignored up till now, thereby eliminating the need for federal intervention.

In the short run, it is hard to say which party will be helped by the consequences of *Baker v. Carr*. The one thing that seems unquestionable is that the democratic process will be helped, and thus all Americans and both parties. Our reaction to the Court ruling is just cheers; no mutters at all.

The Style Is the Man

THE SHREWDEST politician of them all, as Richard Nixon is commonly thought of, is just not a very shrewd politician, we have decided. And for a man who has specialized in the projection of an image, he has an uncanny knack for projecting the image of a man below the dignity of the White House.

In the past few weeks he has: published a book not about international or national affairs but strictly about his own personal political fortunes, with national and international affairs as the backdrop; in that book paid off a number of political scores, one of which involved accusing President Kennedy of endangering the security of the nation for campaign advantage; in a revised edition of the book added a footnote strengthening his charge against Mr. Kennedy by means of a strategically edited quotation from a newspaper story but omitting to mention that the charge has been denied by his own prime witness; called the President and Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy "these carpet-baggers"; not least, made his umpteenth appearance on the Jack Paar show, mourning Jack's farewell.

America's English Cousins

London
ENGLAND plus America equals world-guarantee of a free culture. Some few years ago most men of good will, unbedeviled by politics, might have agreed on that equation. Today, it is more questionable; and voices on both sides of the Atlantic have expressed their concern.

One of the reasons for questioning what once seemed so self-evident is the increasing lack of social purposiveness displayed on both sides of the Atlantic. It is taken for granted that, in this matter, Britain shows signs of

being in a sorrier plight. An empire on which the sun never set is contracting almost monthly on the map. "Far called, our navies sail away"—to hold the oil-wells of some sheikdom intact against the tide for another half-year. But the iron and the steel, and our primacy in them, which led to our nineteenth century Raj, are no longer vanguard instruments of power.

The British Isles are shrinking, to assume, one fears, their geographical size. In the meantime, the United States goes on battling in its global competition with Communism, but the united confidence of the West is

on the wane. What does the future hold for freedom?

One recent essay on this theme over here was Sir Charles Snow's article in the *Sunday Times* on the American prospect. Sir Charles takes it for granted that Britain has had her innings. Her "Great Power" contribution is over. Will the U.S., he asks, go the same way?

Sir Charles did not sit down to write in the role of some imperial Jeremiah. His purpose was to sound an alarm: to urge America to take the British as a "dreadful warning" and so avoid our downfall. The errors of Britain he sets out at some length, but the essence of his diagnosis is: a cocksure pride and a resting on old laurels.

An expanding world-power is purposive. It is confident in its mission and prepared to accept sacrifices. So, in the last half of the nineteenth century, the English artisan might cheerfully vote Tory—despite the trammelled circumstance of his life—since the Crown of India, and the title of Empress, had just been assumed by Queen Victoria, who shared this new glory with her people.

But the war with England's great trade-rival in 1914 put a check on that expansive spirit. Since then we have fought with our backs to the wall (to hold what we had) or imperially marked time. Outwardly, until the thirties, Britain was confident, but no longer purposive. We did not want fresh responsibilities, only our privileges from the past.

In Lawrence Durrell's cosmopolitan chef-d'oeuvre *The Alexandrian Quartet*, set in Egypt before the last war, the narrator notes the loss of respect for England as a potent political force. The Egyptians felt that England would not act: her striking days, they believed, were over. She sat, amidst the rape of the Continent of Europe, like a loving dove on her moneybags. The Palmerston spirit had been bled out of her by the great depression, the means test, and the dole.

England had got the start over Europe in fostering and adopting the Industrial Revolution. But by 1880, Sir Charles Snow maintains, she was technically and industrially behind Prussia. It was only her cornering of raw material throughout the world which gave her an uneasy pride of place. But the danger of power once grasped, states Sir Charles, is that it breeds delusions. Britain has been deluding herself for half a century as to her credits—and all the time they have dwindled and dwindled. Her delusions today are national illusions, and such unrealities can only harm her.

What are these illusions which Sir Charles warns the U.S. not to copy? Well, here are a few; the list could be extended. British engineers are the best in the world, and British scientists ahead of most others. Britain spends enough on education (and scientific education in particular) to keep her easily to the fore.

The British are a chosen race, and as such militarily unbeatable. The island-home of the British people makes her citizens invulnerable to attack, and the "divine right" of her geography is another proof of Providence favoring Britain. The riches and resources of the British in the past are a guarantee of their energy, industry, and indomitableness in the future. Britain and her ally America are safely in advance in the arms race.

These beliefs, which were held as axiomatic by three-quarters of the country ten years ago, have become deflated for many today. History has done the pricking of the balloon for us. Now Sir Charles hopes the U.S. will take warning from our fate. It may be that if the West is to be saved, it will have to be saved by America. Britain can hardly save herself.

For Sir Charles, the antidote to decline lies in education and he points out how much more the Russians are spending on education than we are. Education inculcates both purpose and ability. England has lost the first and is losing the second.

An example of what might be called Russian "indirect education" is the new Penguin paperback *Life in the Twenty-First Century*, edited by two Soviet scientists, which is now on the bookstalls in London. Each chapter of the book deals with some planned feat of, or research in, Russian science, with special reference to their social application. Every country has its own "nominal" and "virtual" philosophy. The official philosophy of the Russian people is, of course, Marxism, but the faith by which most of them sustain their hardship is nationalism. And the hope of this faith, its central consoling dogma, is scientism—the religion of science.

Similarly, if one asks what the "nominal" faith of Britain and the U.S. is, the answer comes easily enough—"Christianity" (though A. P. Taylor, a television don, writing recently in the *Sunday Express*, mentions only the English language as a "common culture" element). But how many live by Christian tenets, or receive the inspiration of regular worship?

Despite the boosted figures for church-attendance in both countries, there is reason to believe that the mass of the people really subscribe to a religion of materialism—to a brash faith in goods and pleasure. If materialism is, indeed, "the faith of the West," then Russia, with its popular "religion of science" may well beat the West hands down at its own game, for scientism and materialism go together. If the West has no other "majority dynamic," things will go ill with us. And this in turn suggests a larger question: how successful are the Christian efforts to evangelize our two nations?

DEREK STANFORD

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The Party, the Patriarch and the World Council

THOMAS E. BIRD

SOME YEARS ago Paul B. Anderson, a long-time friend of Russian Orthodoxy, wrote of the "paradox of a powerful church in subjection." This characterization is still valid in 1962. Nevertheless, the recent admission of the largest Orthodox Church in the world to the World Council of Churches has raised numerous questions about its current situation. The motives for such a step have posed peculiar and, in some ways, unprecedented problems for Christians of the West.

Just before the opening of the Third Assembly of the W.C.C. in New Delhi—and even more in the wake of the admission of the Moscow Patriarchate—a spate of articles and books concerning religion in the Soviet Union appeared. From the data presented in these various analyses, together with the impressions and conclusions which Western churchmen were able to glean from their associations with members of the patriarchal delegation, it is possible to assemble a reasonably coherent picture of some of the most recent developments in the life of the church in Russia. Not all of the pieces fit snugly together and there are important gaps. Moreover, the finished mosaic is not one which will evoke unanimity of interpretation. Nonetheless, an updated image does emerge which is of value to all those interested in the drama of the individual conscience.

Among the most important weathervanes issuing from official circles is the latest edition of the *Atheist's Guide*. This vademecum clearly delineates a shift in the role of the government's Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church. Earlier editions have defined its *raison d'être* as being the means of contact between the Soviet Government and the Patriarchate. The most recent edition notes that the Council checks on the observance of Soviet laws by the church. This represents a state of affairs far different from the symbiosis which was described in these same pages only two years ago.

Official statements by the clergy and hierarchy constitute the most difficult aspect of evaluation. Metropolitan Nikodim, leader of the Russian delegation at

New Delhi, repeatedly insisted that the Orthodox Church is free from state interference. The question here as in all statements made by groups from the Soviet Union is to distinguish expediency and insincerity from prudence and probity. When a figure of the stature of Patriarch Alexei declares that "the Russian Orthodox Church is not hindered in any way by the activity of the State, which by no means obtrudes into her internal affairs," we have a difficult assessment to make. Judgments such as Fr. Antoine Wenger's that "supporting the Soviets may be considered one of the Russian Orthodox Church's obligations, and a condition for survival," must be viewed in the context of that church's century-old history, a history of many compromises by the church in the national interest.

The tragic note which runs through any discussion of this problem is the unspoken accusation of the *bien pensants* that because these shepherds have not chosen an overt martyrdom they are somehow less than worthy of their priestly calling, that they are in fact *manqué* Christians, renegades to a truly witnessing Christianity. In making such cavalier and abusive characterizations, if only by innuendo, the extremely germane facts are obscured that the faith *has* been kept alive in Russia, that the sacraments *have* been dispensed to the faithful, and that the Word of God *has* been preached to them; moreover, that in the face of violent oppression, this is going on today.

WHAT responsibility impinges on the Christian conscience faced with the fact of the church in a Communist state? How is a Western Christian to assess meaningfully the kenosis of the faithful, priests, and bishops of the Russian Church? How ought one come to grips with lives which are daily "signs of contradiction"? This problem is one which has engendered a growing literature. One can list, for example, the writings of Dr. Jan Frankowski in Poland, of Dr. Josef Hromádka in Czechoslovakia, and the correspondence between Karl Barth and Johannes Hamel in Germany. In particular, Heinz-Horst Schrey has reminded us that Christ "is the King . . . even . . . over those whose social and political system is quite contrary to

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ours." And he has exhorted us to "break through the middle wall of partition between us' just as Christ has broken down the wall and is our peace."

The question of whether religion has survived in the Soviet Union has been academic for decades. "Religious belief and prejudices" are, by Party admission, firmly rooted in the popular consciousness, pilgrimages are frequent and well attended, and the Gospel teachings are fresh and vivid in the minds of millions of Soviet citizens. Moreover, there is widespread support of parishes and renovations of church buildings whenever the local authorities will permit them. Devotion and piety exist not, as Belinsky was able to write, "merely among the Old Believers and other sectarians," but among the Orthodox faithful as well.

Before considering the events of New Delhi, a brief glance at the most recent shifts of official policy toward the Russian Church will be useful. On November 11, 1954, a decree of the Central Committee of the Party was published "On Mistakes In Carrying Out Scientific-Atheistic Propaganda Among the Population." This document took note that "there are some citizens who, while actively taking part in the life of the country honestly fulfilling their duty, are still under the influence of various kinds of religious beliefs . . ." The decree then went on to say, "Thorough, patient, and skillfully presented . . . propaganda among believers will help them to throw off [their] religious delusions. On the other hand, any kind of administrative measure or offensive attack against believers and clergy can only do harm, and may confirm or even increase their religious prejudices."

This decree set the tone for anti-religious activity throughout the country until the 21st Congress of the Party in January 1959. The declarations which came out of this Congress emphasized something new: the time had now come for completion of the transition from socialism to communism—and the type of person needed to accomplish this was one of "ideological integrity." That is, he could not be one burdened by the religious prejudices known to be prevalent in Soviet society. Of course, proposals to rid the scene of religion were part of the Communist platform long before the October Revolution. But the new theme was underlined by the optimistic insistence with which the official atheist publications spoke of "finally eliminating religious superstition" with the current seven-year Plan and by the new activist role which was assigned to the Komsomols.

The results of this latest policy are now becoming apparent: the general oppression of bishops and priests; the closing of churches on a scale unknown since the early '30's; the closing of monasteries and convents; the curtailment of sacerdotal preparation; oppressive measures against believers; and a notable increase in

anti-religious literature, coupled with a campaign of scurrilous stories and caricatures.

In the internal life of the church, the retirement of Metropolitan Nikolai, second-ranking prelate in the hierarchy, brought about a series of major personnel changes. The Holy Synod accepted his request to be relieved of the Chairmanship of the Department of External Affairs of the Patriarchate in June 1960 and subsequently released him from the rank of metropolitan. He was succeeded by three men of widely varying backgrounds, each of whom assumed one of Metropolitan Nikolai's several positions.

As Metropolitan of Krutitsy and Koloma, the Metropolitan of Leningrad, Pitirim, was named. As "responsible editor" of the *Journal of The Moscow Patriarchate*, an Assistant Professor of the Leningrad Theological Academy, A. F. Shishkin, was appointed. With his appointment, a violent anti-Western, anti-Vatican line reappeared. As Chairman of the Department of External Affairs, a priest, Boris G. Rotov (in religion Archimandrite Nikodim) was named and elevated to the rank of bishop, making him the youngest member of the Russian episcopate. Concerning Archbishop Nikodim, we can reasonably conclude that, if the government had been opposed to him, he would not have enjoyed the accelerated rise in the church which he has; on the other hand, those who are quick to see in his swift elevation a travesty of the priesthood and episcopate and the initiation of Machiavellian infiltration by "Party men" would do well to reflect on the career of the great Bishop of Milan. He, it will be remembered, rose from catechumen to bishop in the space of eight days.

THREE ASPECTS of the life of the church should especially be noted in reviewing the current ecclesiastical situation: a liturgical and theological renaissance, a prudent and courageous patriarch, and an impatient zeal among the younger clergy.

The liturgical revival which has been taking place under the present patriarch has gone virtually unnoticed in the West. Yet the use of such a term—in reference to a church which has never lost an awareness of its role as the worshipping people of God—demands explication. Keenly aware of the Liturgy's enormous pedagogical value, His Beatitude has issued directives during the last decade and a half insisting that the various services of the church calendar be carried out in the pristine tradition of the rite, with due care and piety. Popular response has been overwhelming: the churches are commonly full not only for the Divine Liturgy but for the canonical hours which precede it as well. Finally, recent years have witnessed a lengthening of the liturgical offices and a return to the rigors of their monastic models.

The Patriarch's policies are in the most solid tradi-

tions of the Orthodox Church and are totally pastoral in their motivation. In his pastoral letters and other writings concerning church government, he constantly recalls his clergy to an awareness of the "feats" demanded by the Christian life and most especially by their priestly office. Springing from an obvious love for the authentic liturgical traditions of Orthodoxy, the leitmotifs of his pontificate have been profound loyalty to the spirit and the letter of the church's laws. Further concrete evidence of his sentiments can be noted in publications of the patriarchate: the Ritual for the sacraments and benedictions and the Ordo in 1956; the Sacramentary in 1958, and annually since 1958 a work called "Liturgical Guidance" to assist the clergy in celebrating the occasional offices. Faced with a political regime which has made a sermon with social action content a punishable offense, the church has countered by heightening popular awareness of the sacramental drama of the Liturgy.

Moreover, in an official patriarchal publication in 1958 there occurs the statement that "for [Russian Orthodox believers] the church with its divine services has always been and will always be . . . a school of faith and piety open to all, the place for healing our spiritual and bodily infirmities. It is therefore no wonder that . . . in the modern conditions of the life of the Russian Orthodox Church, the church is the center of religious life." And in December 1959, the Patriarch reiterated this in a statement made to a W.C.C. delegation: "Our strength lies in the sacraments of the church through the mystery of which comes the unseen but the real presence of the Lord Himself among us."

Such remarks are by no means confined to audiences of committed believers. Speaking in February 1960 to a large and influential group of intellectuals, the

Patriarch spoke movingly about the role of the church in Russia's history, noting that "she has always contributed to the moral edification of our people and, in the past she even contributed to their political edification. . . . In spite of all this . . . she is attacked and censured. . . . Still she calls men to peace and love. . . . Of what value are the efforts of human reason against Christianity, when the history of its two thousand years speaks for itself, when all hostile attacks had been predicted by Christ who promised that she will not be shaken . . . ?"

A sadder note had been struck six weeks earlier when a solemn decree of excommunication was issued by the Patriarch against several well-known priests and laymen because of their public blasphemy. What is worthy of note is that, not yielding to the temptation to overlook this scandal, his Holiness chose to make it a public fact in keeping with the church's traditional understanding of the necessity of advising the faithful of such exclusions.

The final cause of optimism in considering the status of Russian Orthodoxy is the reliable indication that the new generation of priests, the cutting edge of religion in the USSR, is anxious to be done with the stereotype spread far and wide by official Party propaganda of the Church as the handmaiden of the *ancien régime*, "a fortress of superstition and backwardness" (as Mr. Salisbury put it in his recent *New York Times* series). They wish to present a respectable image of the church with appeal for youth and the intellectuals as well as for the broad masses. Toward this end seminary training has been made more rigorous and research standards for graduate work in the theological academies have been raised considerably. A further outgrowth of this trend of thought is the manifest opinion of these clerics that their priestly vocation encompasses a dynamically prophetic and judging role.

THIS IS the ultimate irony of the Russian Church: the prospect of a Christian community forced to repudiate the prophetic content of the faith *by law*, which is the effect of the legal ban on all missionary activity. As Father Georges Florovsky has said: ". . . this type of self-isolation would be the most grievous betrayal of the main vocation of the church. Obviously, Christians should be Christian in all realms of their existence . . . and this is precisely what will be regarded . . . as high treason and an utter disloyalty toward a Marxist state."

The crux of the problem is not the church's understanding of herself but of the Party's understanding of religion, the church, and the role of the individual. In the face of the stubborn continuance of religion, the Party would have to conclude either that it has misunderstood the role and strength of religion (which



t is not prepared to do) or that it has dealt with the problem poorly. *Pravda* has admitted quite openly that "scientific atheist propaganda is not up to the task imposed on it."

A strong case can be made that a gap of major proportions in the Party's religious policy lies in its failure to take account of the role of the individual. There have been defensive admissions of this lack with increasing frequency in recent months. While fifteen years ago such a proposal would have been denounced as "bourgeois sentimentality," today the question of the role of the individual in history is a central point of dialogue between Marxists and non-Marxists. A veteran Party ideologue in Poland recently lamented the lack of any systematic examination of this question by the Party, insisting that an attitude of "what is valid for the collective is valid for the individual" is not an adequate rejoinder to the questions being put to the Party faithful.

Faced with what reliable data suggests was the decision taken at the 21st Party Congress—to eradicate religion totally within the country—it is not surprising that a new "hard line" is making itself felt at every point of Church-State encounter. Nor should it surprise us that the reaction of the church in the face of this threat has been to assume the responsibilities of membership in the World Council of Churches. Here the question can be reasonably posed: what results can be expected of the Russian Church's admission? Various suggestions have been proffered.

It is probably an oversimplification to think that their presence on the Executive Committee will be either an educational experience for the Russian delegates, sensitizing numbers of them to the prophetic dimensions of the Christian faith as Western Christians understand that term or, on the other hand, a forum for expostulating the latest shifts in the Party line. Frequently heard, both conclusions reflect inadequate analysis of the problem, the first erring in its mechanical optimism, the second in underestimating the resources of the W.C.C.

A simpler reason has been suggested, namely, the feeling that a witness made in the bosom of an organization of world-wide proportions will be more efficacious than the lonely and tragic testimony which is possible inside Russia. Without doubt the unique type of intercommunion in autocephaly which will be prominent henceforth within the World Council will not pass unnoticed by the non-Orthodox membership.

In fine, Mr. Charles P. Taft of the Protestant Episcopal Church is probably correct in his prediction that the Russians "will stick to theology and not be obstructionists in the W.C.C." (An attempt at the standard type of propaganda was made at the Vigyan Bhavan and was quickly identified for the crude attempt it was. Such tactics ceased immediately.) The impression con-

veyed in India much of the time was of a naive, almost sentimental feeling about fellowship with other Christians. There was little to suggest either theological or political sophistication. It would be difficult to improve on an editorial comment made in the house organ of a leading Orthodox seminary: "Courageous confession, tragic ambiguity, and diplomatic skill appear to be the main components of the present policy of the Moscow hierarchy."

THE NEW policy enunciated at the 21st Congress with the ensuing anti-religious frontal attack and the major shifts in personnel in the highest councils of the church provide us with a picture of the newest chapter in the history of the Russian Church and suggest that the fundamental Leninist teaching that the Party "must combat religion" in "concrete practical" ways has not been abandoned.

In any analysis of Church-State relations the danger of misconstruing the proper emphasis is constant. The history of the sacral and the secular in Russia is extremely *nuancé*: it has been a continuing series of entangling alliances. Nevertheless, we may be justified in concluding that the Patriarch has decided that the Russian Church will simply *be present* in the World Council as a religious fact (as Visser t'Hooft has put it) making its witness there to Orthodox Christianity, her theology, liturgy and spirituality.

These considerations give rise to the unavoidable question: why has the Soviet Government permitted contact of this sort with the West? History suggests a possible answer. The process of religious persecution involves certain risks. Aware of this, the government has countered with some dramatic move to reassure the "free world" that its domestic policy is in fact one of extremely reasonable tolerance each time that oppression has occurred in the past. In short, if the church can be assumed to have initiated her entry into the World Council (very probably in the hope of finding outside moral support in later conflicts with the state), then the government can be assumed to have acquiesced in order to lay to silence the question of religious persecution.

Père Congar, writing in a somewhat different context, has said "the separation became more marked by the fact that each of the two portions of Christendom withdrew behind the barrier of its own tradition and always judged the other from the point of view of that tradition. . . ." And he drives home the ineluctable point that "there will be no reunion without long, patient, intelligent, and loving renewal of contact."

His words, made in reference to Christians separated by the schism of 1054, are quite as applicable to Christians separated by the Iron Curtain. We must ponder our responsibility as believers to cope without fear or prejudice with the "good fight" of our Russian brethren.

Seeing Is Believing

LAST FALL I wrote about the passing of *Coronet*, which died despite a circulation of three million plus, hard on the heels of such other lamented giants as *Collier's*, *Woman's Home Companion* and *Country Gentleman*. Now the news of a big shake-up in the Curtis empire adds another chapter to what is fast becoming a ghoulish history of magazine publishing.

Curtis publishes the *Saturday Evening Post*, the *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Holiday*, and other magazines. The *Journal* has been engaged in a savage circulation-advertising war with its biggest rival, *McCall's*, which must have cost them both plenty. Reports that the old and staid *Post* was in trouble have been circulating for months, and they were not laid to rest by its shift to a new look.

A company statement has now spelled out Curtis' difficulties. During the first nine months of 1961, the company sustained an operating loss of more than eleven million dollars. After allowances for potential tax credits, this sum was cut to just less than a million and a half—still a big enough net loss to keep any publisher or editor awake nights.

Last year was Curtis' first year in the red since its earliest days, so things could be worse. Despite this fact, there were many rumors about what would be done: the *Post* would suspend publication; *Holiday* would be sold to an outside group; the *American Home* and the *Journal* would consolidate; the entire Curtis group would be sold lock, stock and barrel.

None of these events has come to pass so far, but what Curtis is doing is revolutionary enough. The *Post*, which is already toning down its new look, will get a new editor and will be published forty-five times a year rather than weekly; subscription prices will stay the same despite the reduced number of issues. The *Journal* and *American Home* will for the first time in history accept liquor advertising, and the number of issues of both magazines will be cut from twelve to ten a year, again without any reduction in the subscription price. Furthermore, it was announced, in a clear reference to the *Journal's* battle with *McCall's*, Curtis "has declared itself out of the numbers race," preferring to concentrate on quality. Reliance on cut-rate price offers will be sharply reduced, and cost-cutting will be the rule all down the line.

That's the essence of what Curtis plans to do about its problem, and there has never been much mystery about how the problem arose in the first place. For mass circulation magazines, television is a big competitor. In the last ten years TV advertising revenues have increased at five times the rate of magazine advertising revenues. Last year television advertising in-

creased by almost five per cent while magazine advertising revenues went down by better than one and a half per cent. Curtis, especially on the *Post*, lost more than its fair share of this revenue. On top of that, the proposed increase in postal rates would cost the firm an additional six and a half million a year. The only real surprise about the Curtis shake-up, therefore, is that it was so long in coming.

All this has to be seen against a backdrop of what is happening to newspaper publishing too. Since the end of World War II, the number of cities with rival newspaper owners has declined almost by half, from 117 to 60. Almost fifteen hundred towns either have only one newspaper or are served by two papers owned by the same interests.

What's everybody doing? Looking at TV, I guess, and taking it more seriously than I do, apparently. A recent editorial in *TV Guide* summed up the results of an Elmo Roper poll on this subject, and it is not hard to see why TV feels like crowing a little.

"Suppose you could continue to have only one of the following—radio, television, newspapers, or magazines—which one of the four would you most want to keep?" was one question put to a cross section of American adults. The answers: 42 per cent would keep TV, 28 per cent newspapers, 22 per cent radio, 4 per cent magazines (1) and 4 per cent just didn't know.

The same group was asked which medium they would believe if they received conflicting reports on the same news story from radio, TV, magazines and newspapers. The answers: 39 per cent would believe TV, 29 per cent newspapers, 12 per cent radio and 17 per cent did not know. When this question was turned around to ask which medium they would be *least* likely to believe, 28 per cent said they would be least likely to believe the newspapers, 25 per cent magazines and only 7 per cent mistrusted television.

With all due respects to Mr. Roper and my friends in television, however, I remain a printed-word man. No matter what anyone says, a picture is very seldom worth a thousand words, on or off TV. I like television for what it is, but I hate to see it giving the kiss of death to solid and respected magazines and newspapers. Lamentations won't halt the process, though, and I'm sure many more magazines and newspapers will die before too many years go by.

One thing is sure: this is not a time for anyone anxious to make a fortune to get into the magazine business. But there is, I suppose, one consoling thought here: anyone whose primary interest in magazines was making a fortune would probably not be very good at it anyway.

JAMES O'GARA

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Waugh and His Critics

LEO HINES

EVELYN WAUGH, as if a recalcitrant child, was warned many years ago by America's most distinguished literary critic that to keep on in the direction he was tending would most certainly lead to artistic if not personal debacle. His gift was for comedy, he was told, not for saccharine religiosity; his talent was to spoof the Establishment, not endorse it; only an immature artist assumes the unnecessary burden of trying to make an (apparently) uninteresting figure, Guy Crouchback, the subject of an interesting story. And furthermore. . . .

The recalcitrant child seems not to have amounted to much: certainly not if one judges by the proliferation of commentary which has succeeded Waugh's latest novel, *The End of the Battle*. Many of the critics see a steady decline of his talents: the high tide of his genius, they say, was reached in his early, rapid and often hilarious satires on British upper-class mores (*Decline and Fall*, *A Handful of Dust*, et al.), or in the pellucid, hard-driving wit of *The Loved One*—a strangely prophetic novel which focuses on the great American pastime of necrophilia, and which (oddly enough) antedates the cult of James Dean. In these books, by his supple prose and the witty violence of his satire, Waugh placed himself in the estimable company of Jonathan Swift, and assured himself a large, permanent and devoted following. Few novelists of the thirties and forties are still being read by college students with the avidity that Waugh is today.

As for *Brideshead Revisited*, well, you take sides. If it embodies all that has most irritated Waugh's critics, it is also the favorite of countless of his readers. He writes with a lyricism in this book that never quite repeats itself; he memorializes the mystery of memory, and the sweetest passions of youth, and youth's grandest absurdities; he uncovers the disarming truth that artists however acute in their own ways are still often devoid of the ordinary kinds of intelligence; with baroque ardor he interweaves Virgilian love for the earth with Ronsardian zest for the life of the mind; through it all darts the wraith-like figure of Anthony Blanche—mocking, regretting, loving, and despairing: the wisest of the critics of men and their most disconcerting epitome. To the dismay of a whole generation of intellectuals whose political faith was founded on

emancipation from fascism (and authoritarianism of any kind), the hero turns, for his ideals, to that social order which most vigorously espouses the values of the past, and that religion which most eloquently defends the right of the past to teach the present. To have done so with such totality of commitment was, to many of Waugh's critics, including some of his erstwhile intimates, unforgivable—and incomprehensible.

That was why he was warned so severely. That was why certain echoes of *Brideshead Revisited* which recurred in *Men at Arms* and *Officers and Gentlemen* were greeted with a sharpness of reproof ordinarily reserved to those who lack his verve. The antipathy to Waugh which has but trebled with each volume of his trilogy on the War has, I believe, derived not from a charge that he lacks brilliance, variety or sustained energy, but that he countermarches to the forces of intellectualism which dominate the world of literary criticism. In such a world, furthermore, dominated as it is by systematic skepticism, an ardently sectarian, even dogmatic writer, who is also a "political reactionary," has a hard row to hoe even before his book has reached the critics. If anything is clear from the reviews of his latest book it is that much that is written there is written prior to the publication of the book—mentally if not graphically.

IT SEEMS to me, however, not enough to accord Waugh praise for his style and scorn for his substance: such a dichotomy is seldom admitted in the most elementary course in aesthetics. If his style is hard, plain, yet withal strangely ornate—the effect of an occasional mannerist braid on a rhetoric fundamentally spare; if his symbolism progresses from the murky realms of the pre-conscious to the halcyon world of the English country house; if his tone ranges from the muted lamentation of the suffering to the shrill vulgarities of the over-refined; if his line is now the mordant scrawl or the unclean blot of the Rorschach test and now the fluted elegance of the Bernini pillar—it is in these artistic devices, precisely, that one must discover his meaning, or charge him with a hopelessly pompous pretension. A writer who puts on style without substance is not worthy of the many columns which have praised his style so highly and I will not say rejected so much as declined to examine his substance. When one is busy being emotional it is hard to be critical.

It must be hard, too, for Waugh, and small consola-

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tion that many another artist, long the darling of his public, had to brave their chagrin when he stopped giving them what they wanted and liked, and turned instead to what seemed to him more full of import. The levity, the brilliant levity, of the young Mozart, the young Ronsard, changed at a certain stage in their lives to a grave circumspection and religiosity which their admirers, like Waugh's, found upsetting and repellent.

It may very well be true that with certain kinds of genius you have no hope of bringing along the same audience which once laughed with you, that their repudiation is needed to complete your sense of inadequacy and failure before you can achieve the single-minded concentration that preludes master-works. In other words, I maintain, by standards not at all irrelevant to the arts, Guy Crouchback's ineffectual concern for a hopeless band of Jewish refugees attains to a pathos and sublimity which, while of a different kind from the excellence of, say, *Decline and Fall*, are nonetheless worthy of an artist whose gifts are *en pleine gloire*. Indeed the nub of it may be that Waugh has come to his maturity, and the passing of his dazzling youth regrettable but a fact.

LET US consider the nature of Waugh's admiration or the "Few Old Catholic Families" which, in this capitalized form, has been the butt of so many reviewers' displeasure. Is it the titles, the wealth or power of the Flytes or the Crouchbacks or the rest of that handful of families who were "recusant" in the age of the Tudors, and troublesome afterwards? If so, he would seem to be on shaky grounds, for the family history of the Flytes and Crouchbacks, if I read them right as historical types, would read something very like this summary of the family of Chidiok Tichborne who was executed in 1586 for his part in a "spaniolated" conspiracy against Elizabeth:

"Though Chidiok was the only conspirator of the family, many of his kinsmen suffered prison or death. Thus his father was in prison in London in 1583, some years before his son's execution. His uncle Nicholas of Bartley Maudit lay in Winchester gaol for nine years, and died there in 1589. Father Thomas Tichborne, the martyr, executed in 1601, was probably the son of this

Nicholas, and another kinsman, also Nicholas, was executed about the same time for attempting the priest's release. There was scarcely a year of Elizabeth's reign that did not find one or another of this staunchly Roman family either in Winchester gaol or in one of the London prisons."

It is true that in recalling the recusants' bequest Waugh does not stress the sordidness of their experience but the glory. But so do we in life invest the ugliest of experiences with dignity; it is built into the human mechanism to float a nimbus about past sorrows and so suggest the splendor of their endurance, while hiding the hideous detail. Waugh is no Balzac, no James T. Farrell. He belongs to a different school: a school with a happier faculty for the appraisal of life than naturalism can ever aspire to. Happier in both senses—more true and more joyous.

But the present point is that by recalling the glories of the past a writer may, by throwing his own age into relief, the more clearly articulate thereby his indictment of it. Thus it will be seen that Waugh is still satirizing. He is working with the notion, defensible as an artistic hypothesis even if not as fact, that nature in the past tended to be more large and judicious in its proportions, more swiftly "obedient to high laws." So Homer, so Cicero, so the whole classical school of Western writing have indicted the present. Far from emulating the aristocracy of today, Waugh by the standard of comparison to their forebears is decrying their lassitude with a force even outstripping that of his early rollicks. If he sees much to love and pity now in the objects of his satire whereas earlier he saw only much to ridicule, who is to say the latter judgment is not of a greater and more admirable kind? Admittedly it is not so much fun.

SOMEDAY a happy young graduate student will set out to explore, from Waugh's deftly evocative phraseology, just what he has been getting at for some years. He will observe the early disenchantment with modern *mores* and a growing interest in certain aspects of the Tudor age: the richly ambiguous figure of Father Rothschild in *Vile Bodies*—a figure which gently mocks Thackeray's Father Holt and in turn an ancient prejudice, but a figure which recreates, at the same time, the memory of the Jesuit preachers who, like the Elizabethan John Gerard, risked their lives to minister to the recusant faithful. He will consider Waugh's personal relations with the Farm Street Jesuits, his conversion, his life of Campion; he will look carefully at the spiritual antecedents of the baroque aesthetic of *Brideshead Revisited*; it may occur to him as he reads Waugh's life of Knox—especially the passages on Newman—that with the Oxford Movement was reborn a great and dormant artistic tradition whose last lyric phase was completed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries



when a handful of adherents to the old Religion made their so costly *autos da fé*.

The happy graduate student—happy because he will be working with artistic riches barely glimpsed by the general reading public (or the critics generally) but visible, I am sure, to Waugh—will look to such books as A. C. Southern's *Elizabethan Recusant Prose*, and Louise Imogen Guiney's *Recusant Poets*, and the middle parts of Shane Leslie's *An Anthology of Catholic Poets*. The names of More, Howard, Stonyhurst, Heywood, Campion and Tichborne will recur—and the long-obscured vigor of the subterranean recusant culture will be evident: the *Résistance* of Tudor England. At this point the student could do worse than to read Philip Caraman's translations of the autobiographies of the Jesuits John Gerard and William Weston (foreword by Evelyn Waugh), to identify more of the old Catholic families whose memory is constantly evoked in Waugh's later books: the family of Southampton whose scion was the "onlie begetter" of Shakespeare's sonnets; the family of William Byrd, whose prodigious musical compositions are just now circulating on a large scale.

Waugh, in short, has troubled a slumbering tradition into wakefulness. In so doing he has evoked a gravity and a religious seriousness, mingled of classical *spoudaion*, of medieval contempt for the world, and of recusant martyrdom: a complexus likely to be highly unpalatable to the jocund modern, and unmistakably central to the Christian appraisal of life. An art work is not meant to be taken as a doctrinal tract, of course, any more than (excepting by their own choice, Dreiser and company) it is meant to be subject to the narrow confinements of politico-economic ideology. But as the recusant poets sang so pitifully of the dread of death, so Guy Crouchback has experienced another consequence of sin than the dread of death: the aridity of the spiritual isolate in a world of interests hostile to his own. To Guy *realpolitik* is repulsive because it is worldly, and he, in his bumbling way, is not.

THERE is a curious continuity to English Catholicism. After Recusancy, and a fitful Cavalier revival, it seems to have slumbered, a word by which I mean, rather than death, a quiet continuity. Waugh chooses to represent this slumber with the symbol of the country house. Of course, when he rhapsodizes over this symbol of hieratic orthodoxy, it is not completely possible to exonerate him of the often repeated charge of social-climbing-in-print. Nor is it any easier to prove. The charge, it seems to me, ought to be tempered with a fair reading of his works and the inescapable conclusion that such a reading leads to, that the house is, for Waugh, a symbol of much more consequence than mere economics.

The country house is, I believe, a paradoxical symbol of the city of man, and of the continuity of The Sub-

lime, folded from Longinus into eighteenth-century aesthetic and serving as a humanistic substitute for the classical Christian tradition which slumbered. It is also Waugh's existential symbol and his way of revealing the ethic of his characters. A woman with a certain cast of mind appreciates the beauty of an Aubusson rug, or she does not. A man's period chairs, or lack of them, his paintings, his hangings, his garden tell all there is to know about him. The blithe decay of an elderly man whose life has gotten out of hand manifests itself in the blithe decay of his estate. Professor Richard Hughes once pointed out, in a lecture, that the oval dining-room, the circular race-track, in *Vile Bodies*, are the perfect symbols, in that novel, of the futility and nihilism of the lives lived by the people in that dining-room, or at that race track. Contrary to the environmentalists of the nineteenth century, Waugh seems to be saying, our inner selves quite simply spill out and reveal themselves in the home we choose or the way we design and keep it. We make the world about us.

NOW IN all this, it must be recognized that Evelyn Waugh has a rare kind of genius. Taken all in all, he probably knows more about the art of domestic architecture than anyone in the world now writing fiction. He is in the grand tradition of one of his idols, the landscape architect Humphrey Repton, who saw the country house not indeed as a symbol of social status but of a great *social art*, whose structure sublimely mirrors and sings the structure of minds tempered by learning and refined by taste and good manners, mind recalled by the ampleness of nature to the recollection of a beneficent Maker, dedicated above all to the sweet severity of a gracious life in a world of hurly-burly. A stable, pastoral, Christian society, in short, makes up the core of Waugh's symbolic structure. Whether it is a practical world or not is as hard to say as it would be of any utopian view. Practicality never was the dominant note of utopianism, though that lack need not vitiate either the acuity of a writer's social indictment nor the beauty of his alternative.

The final meaning of Waugh's pastoral utopianism reaches beyond Repton's, however, for Repton's peculiar doctrine of the sublime represented (in Waugh's mind, I think) that humanist inter-regnum, the slumber, the Arcadian exile that intervened between Tudor recusancy and the Oxford Movement, between the glory of English Catholicism and its rebirth. Unperceived that the world is an insufficient end in an inadequate glory, he worked with "serene prospects," with the hieratic structure of a pastoralism which exalted the world: this is the core meaning of the symbol of the country house in his novels.

But his more mature judgment, it should be observed, repudiates the best of the world. The key to be found at the end of *Brideshead Revisited* wh

Charles reflects on the world he had loved with Sebastian, celebrating the while (*d'après* Ronsard) with strawberries and wine, with poetry, wit and friendship—all those heady joys of pagan innocence. But Sebastian was only the forerunner, as the novel says. Waugh puts his final value on the world when he has Charles turn from the country house, epitome of classical civilization for a beauty older even “than Acre or Jerusalem.” From the pagan love for Sebastian, to the mature love for Julia, to a repudiation of the best the city of man has to offer, Charles moves to the life of the spirit. The perfectionist aesthetic which he had inherited from the Georgians, he rejects, first, for the aesthetic of the baroque, and then for the “beaten copper lamp of deplorable design.” For in its flickering lights the world is, as it was to the recusants, a vanity of vanities: *Quomodo sedet sola civitas*.

The hieratic implications of this change of values will long disturb many of Waugh's critics, though profoundly hieratic implications are interwoven into his earlier aesthetic. Nor will it be easy to forgive that his renunciation of the world in all its beauty was not lassical without being intensely personal—to many critics so delicately personal as to be embarrassing. From the pragmatic point of view, his initial mistake was in exposing, beside his religious experience, the efficacy of his religious experience. He need not have done it. One detects too canny a mind underneath the snipish smile to believe he could not gauge the consequences. His exposure of himself was more likely, then, a Cavalier act, impetuously begun in *Brideshead Revisited* and blithely extended in *Pinfold*, the life of sin, and in the great Crouchback trilogy. And such was the fate of the few old Catholic families of Tudor England that could have approved.

The Ant and the Red Feather

His red feather, like a soft fur-flower
 From a tropic bird in bloom, is being drawn
 Slowly, patiently, across the floor of the subway train
 For an ancient ant for secret splendid purpose
 Which the magnificence of the plumage to his eye
 And the stateliness of his carriage portend.
 His pompous insect pride is greater, yes, and brighter,
 Than his precious burden.

What he shall do
 With such a comparatively light but equally useless
 White elephant is an aesthetic question
 Even the entomologist would be reluctant to answer,
 Proposing, of course, he were a scholar—

but doesn't it show
 The gravitational pull of beauty, however fantastic,
 The sensitive souls of even the lowest species?

PHILIP MURRAY

THE STAGE

It's Spinach And The Hell With It

AT THE risk of being considered an irredeemable snob, or a “so-called” American, let me come right out and say that the Broadway musical has become a nearly intolerable experience, if indeed it was ever, save for a few exceptions, anything else. It's about time we drop the business of praising musicals for their expertise, their expression of native genius and indigenously high spirits, while making light of their impossible books. For what has happened is that whereas the books remain impossible the expertise is dwindling, the high spirits have become thoroughly ersatz and a new, destructive element has crept in to the enterprise.

We have been under the tyranny of a body of high-church opinion which, accomplishing a back-breaking arc, has managed to link up with that of the low-church, or “smasheroo” boys. Ever since Eric Bentley, in all other respects the best critic we have ever had, issued his various pronouncements to the effect that the musical was intellectually and aesthetically respectable and that there was great danger of snobbery in disliking it, we have been more than indulgent; we have, to put it bluntly, been terrified of being seen with our noses in the air.

Now the musical has of course always been characterized by its more or less synthetic quality, its presence as a put-together object. But what is immediately discernible in the season's second wave of super-colossi is that the atmosphere of synthetic contrivance has thickened. Even more, the new musicals, like nylon being made from nylon, plastic from plastic, are being made from each other, their constituent parts having no real existence outside the world of pre-fabrication, their roots lying in the immediate past of the genre, instead of in events, external shapes and colors or the life of the imagination. The effect is rather like seeing an elaborate office machine, a computer say, feeding itself its own data.

An especially flagrant example of this from the trio of recent openings—“No Strings,” “All-American” and “I Can Get it for You Wholesale”—is the dancing. It is all Jerome Robbins now, “West Side Story” tailored (inexpertly) to circumstance, except where vestiges of the “Oklahoma!” tradition remain or where raids (usually and ironically resulting in the show's stopper) are made upon dance forms of more exotic instigation, *horas* or *jotas*, which are, however, invariably painted Robbins-egg blue. So with the settings: everything these days is lowered from the flies; and with the humor: the chief reliance everywhere is on the most uninspired sort of incongruity—old ladies doing soft-

shoe routines, physics professors coaching football teams, sexpots quoting Kant.

But the primary descent is from the condition of myth, or fable, that was once the musical's *raison d'être*. "Oklahoma!" and "Guys and Dolls" may have been pseudo-myths of rural and urban America, but at least they drew from folk sources and existed as objects of some independence and self-sustaining grace. The new musicals are factitious, entirely spurious artifacts manufactured from daydreams, at best, not true fantasies, and tied with the utmost mechanical schematizing to our cheapest expectations, our least defensible sentimentalities and our craving to have reflected back at us the broadest, least examined "images" of our contemporary reality.

What is ironic is that these reflected mopings are invariably out of date, just as the use of "Picasso" to show knowledgeability about abstract art is hopelessly behind the times. "No Strings" is built on the dream of expatriatism, the American in Paris, and "I Can Get it for You Wholesale" on the legend of Sammy Running. All right. Myths aren't measured by the calendar. But of course these aren't myths but figments, contrived images of yearned-for experience that lack even the honesty and courage to spread out to their full sizes. For "No Strings" cuts short its own impulse by concluding that pine-scented, hamburger-heaped America is best and that work is better than play, and "Wholesale" ends with all the sting of sharp practice and face-trampling ambition—those virtues we all secretly want to see immortalized—neatly counteracted.

That is to say, where they haven't employed the method of straightforward fairy-telling, the better musicals have always rested on some illicit or censorable or problematic activity which we wish celebrated and given formal movement, as in "Guys and Dolls," "Pal Joey" or this season's one acceptable job, "How to Succeed in Business." But "No Strings," for example, apart from its cheapening of the American-in-Europe theme, also debases and eviscerates its other main motif—that of interracial romance. Its final scenes, incredibly, solve the couple's problem by putting forth the proposition that the whole thing never happened, that it was all a dream, to be incarnated only when the situation is more promising. But this is in line with the fact that the show never once uses the word *white* or *Negro*, which one reviewer found refreshing but which is rather like a long discussion of the armistice that never once mentions the war.

Such dishonesty pervades "No Strings" throughout. It is full of fake local color, fake musical procedures, fake dancing, fake blues, fake emotions that haven't even the excuse of being well faked. For the show is so stiff, so like a Peruvian movie with everybody lined up facing the camera, that the very least thing we may be looking for, pleasure in skill and animated sights, is

denied us. Diahann Carroll may not be responsible for being a very much lesser Lena Horne, but she is surely responsible, or her director is, for acting in so rigid and arthritic a manner that we long for her to break into Richard Rodgers' deadly dull and imitative (of himself) songs. But the whole synthetic nature of "No Strings" is marvelously bodied forth in a scene of emotional crisis where someone furiously flings a glass against the wall. Wanting a crash, or at least a clunk, we are given a tiny "glup,"—the thing was plastic.

"I Can Get it for You Wholesale" is better, by about three degrees of plausibility and physical accomplishment. Some of Jerome Weidman's original Seventh Avenue Sociology comes through and there are a few dances and songs which carry forward the book, or whatever constitutes the show's central movement, instead of existing as hermetic exercises, specialty numbers or fragments from some vast audition. "All-American," on the other hand, is a monstrosity. A vehicle for Ray Bolger, who sadly has become so decrepit that he requires another sort of vehicle, it begins with a plane-load of immigrants at Idlewild expressing a horrible musical desire to be "melted in our melting pot" and made "red, white and blue," leans heavily on the relationship between our lower impulses and our higher education, and winds up Act I with a display of sterile acrobatics and a football game in the aisle: that is one of the most exquisitely agonizing embarrassments in recent memory. We left at the half.

A last word. There is certainly nothing wrong with frivolity, as wise and humane critics keep insisting. But stiff frivolity, hokey frivolity, frivolity that repeats the jokes we have all heard and the capers we have all seen? Frivolity that feeds off itself, that belies our experience, that crowds out our authentic lightnesses? Frivolity that is really a desperate and mechanical kind of game with straws?

RICHARD GILMAN

THE SCREEN

Malice Toward None, Charity For All

NOW THAT all is grist for the movie mill, or shouldn't be too surprised at some of the subjects that turn up on our screens—but one doesn't have to like them or find them palatable. However, when films controversial and skillfully-made as the Spanish "Viridiana" (Kingsley) and the Italian "Bell' Antonio" (Erbassy) appear in this country, one should be aware of how the wind blows—especially since both pictures won prizes at film festivals, a distinction, by the way, that is becoming less and less laudable.

I should hate to call anyone blasphemous, since blasphemy implies *intentional* indignity to the Suprem

Being; and director-writer Luis Bunuel's "Viridiana" is so ambiguous that many of its apparently shocking and scandalous scenes could mean one thing or another. Furthermore, Bunuel, said to be an atheist although he was brought up as a Catholic by Jesuits, is not so much mocking God in "Viridiana" as he is religion and man's attitude toward God.

He displays a Spanish pocketknife that is made in the shape of a crucifix; he shows a little girl burning the ex-novice's crown of thorns; and he stages an orgy scene with a group of disreputable beggars that makes "La Dolce Vita" look like child's play. While a record on the old victrola blares out the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's Messiah, the brutal, lewd rabble carry on in a vile manner, then suddenly hold their positions around the banquet table to resemble the characters in da Vinci's Last Supper. Whether Bunuel meant to indicate that even the basest people have the potential for sainthood, or whether he was objecting to the reverence that many have for the da Vinci painting, or whatever he had in mind here is not clear. The effect, in any case, is overwhelmingly offensive; and it must be remembered that it is Bunuel who controls the symbols he uses; it was he who selected the blind beggar, the cruelest and meanest of the group, to assume the Christ position in the extraordinary Last Supper tableau.

Luis Bunuel, who is now a Mexican, returned to his native Spain to make "Viridiana." His film won a prize at Cannes, a protest from the Vatican, and has been banned in both Spain and France. The director-writer thinks "Viridiana" has "most of the themes which are closest to me and which are my most cherished interests." Anyone familiar with Bunuel's pictures through the years will realize he restates his themes often—from the *avant-garde* sick surrealism of "Un Chien Andalou" (made with Salvador Dali in 1929) and "L'Age d'Or" (which attacked charity, convention, capitalism, Catholicism—and started riots in Paris in 1930, and is still banned in many countries including the United States) to his later films made in Mexico, among which are "El," with its excursions into abnormal psychology, and "The Young and the Damned," a vicious study of juvenile delinquents. Bunuel's "most cherished interests" seem to be violence, death, religion, eroticism; and these are the subjects covered in "Viridiana."

The film's plot is simple enough. It mainly concerns a young and very unworldly novice (Silvia Pinal) who is persuaded by her Mother Superior to visit her uncle-in-law (Fernando Rey), who paid for her education. When the girl refuses to marry the obsessed uncle, he angers himself; and feeling some guilt, the naive girl stays on his estate, turning part of it into a refuge for grotesque collection of filthy and evil beggars and hermits—much to the understandable dismay of the

uncle's illegitimate son (Francisco Rabal) who hopes to improve the farm. The corruption of the young girl by this set-up and the ill-effect on her innocence on the people around her are, to say the least, disturbing to watch. The acting is good, and Bunuel's direction is forceful. But the script is too contrived, as are many of the symbols with which the film is crowded. The total effect becomes much too equivocal to take seriously. Bunuel, who is at times almost as naive as his heroine, has said that his aim is to show that we do not live in the best of all possible worlds.

IT WOULD be interesting, though perhaps not profitable, to turn Luis Bunuel loose in Sicily, where, as far as I can make out from "Bell' Antonio," the main concerns in life are sex and the grabbing of power (financial and political). In any case "Bell' Antonio" is not a Spanish film directed by Bunuel, but an Italian movie directed by Mauro Bolognini, with a script by Italians and stemming from an Italian novel. No doubt they know what they're talking about; and if the film presents the Sicilians as a narrow, sex-power-minded lot, the fault must be with the Sicilians. It must be said however, that perhaps "Bell' Antonio" is too Latin for foreigners, especially North Americans, to grasp.

The story, set in the city of Catania in the midst of this sex-power milieu, is about an extremely handsome young man who has quite a reputation as a Don Juan but finds himself impotent whenever he goes to bed with a woman whom he really loves. He marries a very attractive girl who is both angelically innocent and from a wealthy family. When, after the first year he has still not been able to consummate the union, her family gets the marriage annulled, and the girl marries again. The young man is heart-broken, and his father insists that the Church was bought off.

I'm not sure what "Bell' Antonio" is trying to prove. It is very well acted throughout, especially by Marcello Mastroianni and Claudia Cardinale as the young couple, and by Pierre Brasseur and Rina Morelli as the boy's parents, all of whom contribute effectively to several greatly moving scenes. The black-and-white photography of the Catania buildings, both exteriors and interiors, is stunning. But the only message I could get from this off-beat picture is that its Sicilians seem in urgent need of catechism lessons and/or the services of a good psychiatrist.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG

Solution

With logic's rules I have not tamed my heart,
And so I borrow poet's art
Trying to gather vagrant dreams within
Determined lines of metric discipline.

SISTER M. ELIZABETH DE SALES, S.S.J.

APRIL 13, 1962 65

BOOKS

Baiting the Warren Court

Congress and the Court. By Walter F. Murphy. Chicago. \$6.95.

by Walter Dean Burnham

UNTIL QUITE recently, scholarly studies in the field of constitutional law were overwhelmingly influenced by the mores of legalism itself. Their common denominator lay in the exploration of the rationale of judicial opinions and the evolution of formal constitutional doctrine. Without denying the necessity of this kind of traditional analysis, today's political scientists have come to recognize that it gives us an incomplete understanding of the role of courts and judges in our scheme of government. The study of courts as political institutions requires greatly increased concern with the realities of political process and political power. This in turn requires exploration of the constant interplay of contending groups, each of which seeks to promote its own aims and those of its clientele through appeal to government, or alternatively to block the drives of its rivals.

In this book Professor Murphy of Princeton University examines the struggle which raged around the Warren Court during the great "Court-curbing" upheaval of 1955-59. The author has consciously modeled his case study on the lines of Stephen K. Bailey's superb *Congress Makes a Law*. In nearly all respects it measures up to the very high standards which Bailey set for this kind of study a decade ago. It should be said at the outset that Professor Murphy has produced an example of an all-too-rare species: a meticulous piece of scholarship on a subject of genuine importance which can be nevertheless read, understood and savored by the layman.

The major statements of the book are that all active politics is a struggle for power; that interests which come off second-best before the Supreme Court are likely to make an effort to redress the balance by appealing to some other agency of government which is more friendly

to their claims; that historically, popular mythology to the contrary, this has always been the case, though never so explicitly as at present; and that when the Court meets a powerful political coalition which is clearly determined to have its own way in public policymaking, it usually has little alternative but to get out of the way.

The book's first section is a brief but suggestive review of the history of past clashes between Court and Congress, threaded on these themes. Moving on to the recent hullabaloo over the Warren Court, Professor Murphy sharply delineates the power factors involved. Bluntly speaking, it seems that the Warren Court during the mid-1950's gored too many prize

oxen at the same time. In quick succession it handed down opinions which aroused the hostility of White Southerners, the business community, those whose interest in internal security ranged from concern to obsession, and specific groups such as the FBI, the Association of State Attorneys General, the Conference of State Chief Justices, the International Police Chiefs' Association and the American Bar Association. Murphy properly observes that no small part of the blame for the resultant uproar must be borne by the writers of majority opinions—especially the Chief Justice himself—for their unfortunate habit of making those opinions seem to say more than they really did by the gratuitous insertion of sweeping generalizations touching on the most fundamental questions of constitutional power. But in any event, and by any standard, the Court found itself confronted by

Recent and Notable

Capital Punishment, A World View. By James Avery Joyce. Nelson. \$5.00. Another contribution to the debate, this one of more than routine interest. Mr. Joyce, an English attorney, compiles a dossier of the state of legal execution throughout the world, composes a restrained but highly effective indictment of the practice, and offers some original ideas concerning its abolition.

Come, Let Us Worship. By Godfrey Diekmann, O.S.B. Helicon. \$4.50. One thing which has given impetus to the liturgical movement in America is the high quality of the writing that has been done in its behalf. Father Godfrey Diekmann, the editor of *Worship*, stands with the best in this respect. The present collection of lectures and addresses is a fine example of his skill. Centering his attention on the Sacraments, he writes lucidly and persuasively on the liturgical dimension of sacramental life, this book itself providing another reminder of the vitality and importance of the liturgical apostolate.

The Cardinal Spellman Story. By Robert I. Gannon. Doubleday. \$5.95. The much-discussed biography of

the Cardinal-Archbishop of New York, by the noted Jesuit educator and author.

The Ecumenical Council, The Church and Christendom. By Lorenz Jaeger. Kenedy. \$3.95. Nothing could be more fitting or welcome, than an ecumenical study by Archbishop Jaeger of Paderborn, Germany. And this book is all that one would expect of one who has played an important role in German Catholic ecumenicism. It is lucid, friendly and marked by an illuminating but unobtrusive display of scholarship.

The New Negro. Edited by Mathew H. Ahmann. Fides. \$3.50. A collection of essays on the changing facts and prospects of the Negro situation in America. Included are pieces by Stephen J. Wright, president of Fisk University, Kenneth F. Clark, Diane Nash, one of the Freedom Riders, and William J. Kenealy S.J. There is also the transcript of a valuable symposium on "The Role of the Negro in American Culture" that was originally broadcast on WBAI-FM with James Baldwin, Alfred Kazin, Nat Hentoff, Lorraine Hansberry and Langston Hughes as participants.

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a group of antagonists with high social status and prestige. When they appealed to Congress the response was quick and volcanic. Not only was Congress' mood friendly to the claims of the Court's critics, but it had some institutional axes of its own to grind in the wake of the *Nelson, Watkins* and *Yates* decisions.

The author's discussion of the struggles which then erupted on the Congressional center-stage is a tale of pure fascination. Particularly absorbing is the description of the political brokerage exerted in the Senate by Senators O'Mahoney and Johnson to contain the Court-curb-ing drive before it did real damage to the existing balance of power. The tale reaches the level of high drama when, at the very end of the 1958 session, despite the existence of a clear majority in favor of its passage, Johnson and the Senate liberals maneuver to kill off one of the most far-reaching of the anti-Court bills. The Court then follows historical precedent by retreating during the 1958-59 Term—prematurely, Murphy thinks—and the crisis subsides.

If there is any inadequacy in this book, it is that Murphy fails to match Bailey's effort to explore the speculative implications of his material. After all, this was not just another group struggle in Congress. If the conservatives had had their way, they would have effected a radical shift in the balance of power between Court and Congress. Why did they come so close to success? Once conservatives and upper-status groups were second to none in their veneration of the Supreme Court. Now they are second to none in their hostility to it. Why? Can the Court continue to perform its traditional role effectively without their support? The public-opinion polls which the author includes suggest a moderately strong pro-Court, pro-Warren sentiment among the public at large. What part of "the People," then, is really represented in Congress? What is happening to the structure and shape of American elite opinion under the inexorable pressures of social change and cold war? What is happening to the institutions of government themselves?

It would be unfair, however, to



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make too much of this shortcoming. If Professor Murphy has not sought to give definitive answers to these questions, his worthwhile and well-written book insistently raises them. Surely this is enough to recommend it.

The Idle Rich

Luxury Cruise. By Joseph Bennett. George Braziller. \$4.50.

by Martin Tucker

THIS IS one book which should be judged by its cover: its jacket displays the sleek hull of a ship floating on waves of bilious money. It is the first satiric note in Mr. Bennett's first novel, and there are many more such moments. Unfortunately, the author seems intent on sailing over the crest of the wave of passing events. The result is a pleasant, elegant dip into the moneyed ways of rich people in an aquamarine milieu, but there is no immersion into their hearts or minds.

Bennett puts a group of rich Americans on a cruise ship, steers the plot into their cabins and lounges, and then lets the unavoidable mishaps gather full steam. Since this is a four-months cruise where \$14,230 purchases the minimum accommodation, only one class of person is aboard, but there is variation enough in the self-made, pre-made and unmade men and women who all take the journey in search of surcease but only manage to transfer their problems from land to sea.

Among the large cast are four genres of wealth—Eastern, Chicago, Texan and Californian. The Californians are the showiest, especially Mrs. W. W. Holahan, who arrives on the dock, "enormously prominent in green"; green shoes, green satin heels, a fur coat, and a million-dollar necklace of emeralds and diamonds. She is to provide one of the two crutches on which the novel moves, gracefully though fitfully. It is her necklace which inspires admiration, envy, greed, and ultimately revulsion. One of the passengers steals it from her cabin safe while she is noisily sleeping. But who? Obviously it was not done for gain, since the



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necklace is too prominent to be sold in its assembled state, and even hacked apart its jewels would be recognizable. Mr. Bennett provides the answer halfway through the book, and shows that an act of spite leads the guilty party into the most interior hell a snob can create.

The other crutch is provided by a familiar enough literary character—the hard, frustrated, hysterical, aging Eastern female whose husband cares too much about his Wall Street business and too little about his loss of virility. When Polly begs her husband to come to the cabin with her on the first night out, Cort refuses. He is having an important talk with an influential Chicago lawyer. She wanders alone to the cabin, undresses, gets into bed and desperately dreams of Cort beside her. Or that handsome man she met in the lounge. *Someone*. Ashamed of her thoughts, she dozes off. A few minutes later she is awakened by the figure of Emlen Boyne, who has, in a drunken moment, entered the wrong cabin. Polly screams, Boyne is locked up in a closet, and the Captain is called in. He makes short work of the affair—by ignoring it.

The journey is full of other personal dramas. Doreen Helfman of Chicago, who has married into the lephth of Neapolitan ducal decadence and now hates it, looks sneeringly at her effeminate husband, Sua Altezza Serenissima Filippo, Principe Capodichino di Finistrelli, and is glad her two daughters are far away in a New England school. One of the richest men in the world, Willie Ashcroft, sits in his private cabin and deslights objects while his wife procures one of the ship's crew and takes him to her bedroom. A confidence man, Mr. Black, goes around lying on the passengers. A Chicago heiress flirts with the two best-looking men on board.

As an entertainment package, *luxury Cruise* is the Grand Hotel of sea-going novels, and it should have been popular with the transient trade. But since the author is a reader and editor of the excellent literary journal, *The Hudson Review*, the book is somewhat of a disappointment. It is clean, spare and fresh, as good a job as one can get,

but it is no more than that. And it has no real conclusion, unaccountably ending in the gambling salon at Nice, where the passengers have debarked for a few days. Although the ship has already become a monotonous hell, the Riviera is not the terminal point of the cruise. It is a pity Bennett did not use his sophisticated talents to provide another section to his novel—a glimpse into the world of the bored and idle rich after even their pipe dreams of diversion have burst.

Question Marks

The Fantastic Lodge. Edited by Helen MacGill Hughes. Houghton Mifflin. \$4.

In the Life. By Theodore Isaac Rubin. Macmillan. \$3.95.

by Nat Hentoff

BOTH THESE books are bare case histories. For *The Fantastic Lodge*, a young narcotic addict taped her autobiography in talks with Howard

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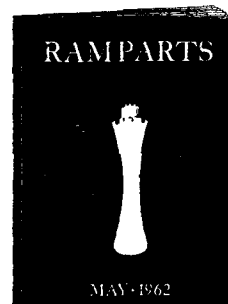
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70 THE COMMONWEAL

Becker, a Chicago sociologist. Five years after their last session, she committed suicide. *In the Life* is a series of treatment notes taken by Theodore Isaac Rubin when he was a prison psychiatrist. Rubin's involuntary patient was a prostitute. Her written history ends when she leaves the prison, and she quite probably is still "in the life."

Mr. Becker's friend—and she came to be that—was bright, hopefully candid, and at the time of her sessions, remarkably resilient. On one level, her story is one of the more comprehensive and least Sunday-supplement-like introductions to the microcosm of the addict. "It's like belonging to some fantastic lodge," she explains, "but the initiation ceremony is a lot rougher." In addition to the addict's initiation rites, she describes, often with grim wit, the circular trap in which the addict has been placed by our present system of punitive "cure." Like other lodge members, she soon became what Deputy Chief Inspector Edward Casey, head of New York City's Police Narcotics Bureau, recently described as "one of those hopeless ambulatory question marks who are expected somehow to stay away from dope without the benefit of proper rehabilitation." And without the benefit of medically administered dosages if they can't withdraw.

What makes *The Fantastic Lodge* more provocative and poignant than most such documentaries, however, is the girl's continual search in her family, her love affairs, everywhere, for some life goal beyond rehabilitation itself. She was, in fact, lost before her first fix, "right back where I'd always been, sitting on the floor somewhere without anything, not knowing where to go or what to do." The book, in short, is a complementary volume to Paul Goodman's *Growing Up Absurd*, because, with all her lively potential, this girl did just that.

The older she becomes, moreover, the more she wondered if most of the members of the main lodge weren't about as hollow as she. "The junkie frightens them," she says of the general public's reaction toward her world. "In all those loud protes-

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tations about "Throw them in jail! Get rid of them, preying on society!, etcetera, etcetera, all I can see is the terror underneath it. And all that terror indicates to me is that they have eyes almost, in a weird sense . . . They realize even they . . . could somehow be hooked in the end."

Or, further to the point, most dreadfully are, not to her kind of junk, but to what Lewis Mumford has called our "gadget-ridden, goods-tuffed emptiness." And how does one try "cold turkey" in that situation?

Similarly, the Jenny of *In the Life* exists analysis, not only for the usual reasons, but because the analyst has not been able to tell her just what working values she will find in the life of "the others" which will warrant the switch. Nor, as his brief notes to himself after each session indicate, has he ever realized the need to pose and answer that question for her. He tells Jenny that her life is empty. "Empty, full, I'll tell you," she answers. "Doc, got to live now. Who knows, the big blast some'll knock us all off. Unhappy with now? Sure. But look, Doc, at least I'm no crock." The patient means, she adds, those "legit babes," married women who are "prossing just like me, Doc, only with one guy instead of a hundred." And she means the teachers she had when she was a child. "You ought to be eating them, Doc. Oil them up a bit, loosen them up."

Both books include glossaries of derground argot, and *In the Life* adds some psychiatric terms as well. "Motivation," for example, is defined: "here, the degree of desire for help in examining and solving one's problems."

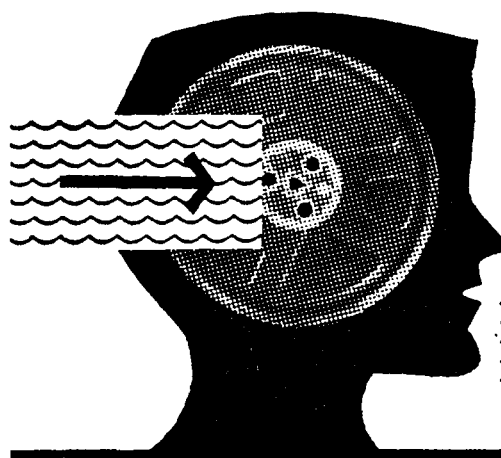
Motivation is more than that, Doc.

REVIEWERS

Valter Dean Burnham, a previous contributor to *The Commonweal*, is a member of the faculty at Kenyon College.

Martin Tucker, a member of the faculty of Long Island University, is a frequent reviewer in these pages.

Lat Hentoff, a regular contributor, has written for *The New Yorker*, *Harper's*, and many other American journals.



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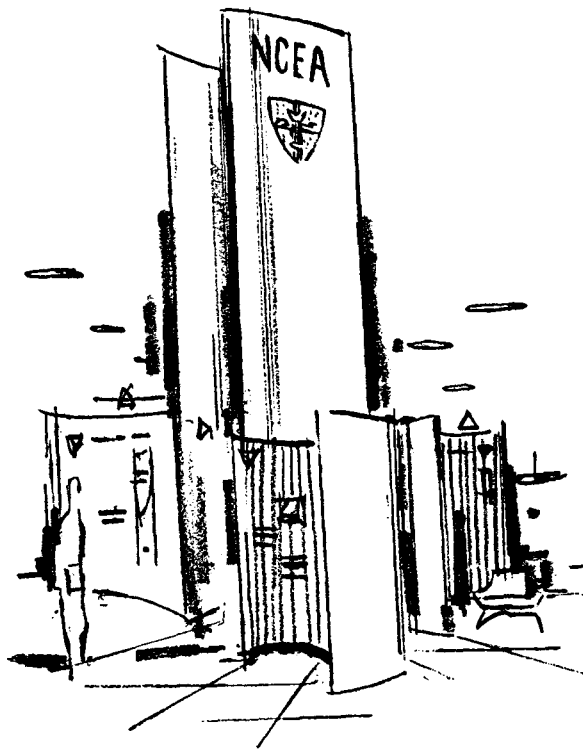
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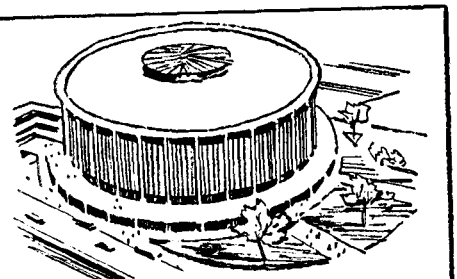
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